

STATE OF CONNECTICUT GENERAL ASSEMBLY
ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

IN RE: SB-206AAC Local land Use Agencies and the Siting of Telecommunication Towers
MARCH 1, 2010

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 206

June Lee of The Easton Conservancy Trust

This Bill is necessary

Local Land Use Agencies alone have the required depth of knowledge to site cell towers:

SB206 very sensibly uses the available energy and local knowledge of 169 towns to personalize the tower siting process, not to obstruct the process, but to apply the depth of local knowledge the Connecticut Siting Council can never have to allow Connecticut citizens to choose how they want to provide for wireless service.

Local Land Use Agencies will satisfy citizens that siting is just:

This local management of this issue would assure citizens that a judicious and informed procedure was used to arrive at the best possible decision and not one imposed by a remote bureaucratic state council. Most often, inappropriate sites are chosen from a small pool of available sites by cellular tower companies because they wish to accomplish this task expediently in order to provide service and increase revenues. These inappropriate town sitings are approved because the Siting Council is unfamiliar with the landscapes, neighborhoods, and economic and environmental necessities of the towns. If local land use agencies made these decisions, the process would include input by citizens (who are not permitted to speak at Siting Council hearings) and the authoritative opinions of those who best know the town.

Connecticut should conform to the procedures of the other 48 states:

Every other state in the country locates such towers in an equitable manner. SB206 would bring Connecticut in line with the 48 other states. Local control of communications facilities is appropriate and may be accomplished in a sensible fashion. The Siting Council is overburdened with power plants such as Kleen Energy and electric utility transmission lines. There is no need to have them oversee the placement of cellular towers.

The Siting Council does not appreciate the impact of towers on towns:

Townpeople and homeowners have come to reasonably expect that industrial facilities will not be placed in residential neighborhoods or scenic rural areas. Despite strenuous citizen and official opposition, the statistic that of 300 applications for cellular towers, the Siting Council rejects only 4 towers indicates that the Council does not recognize the powerful and lasting impact of these decisions on the citizens of Connecticut.

Conclusion: The Connecticut Siting Council has become so pro-utility infrastructure that they have simply overemphasized expediency over care for the rights of neighborhood homeowners.